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ABSTRACT

This document, divided into five chapters, describes and analyzes the role of Hispanics in American history. Chapter 1 presents an historical overview of Hispanic immigration to the United States, focusing separately on four groups: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Hispanics. Chapter 2 discusses the contributions of Hispanic immigrants to American government, learning, and culture. The benefits of immigration are discussed generally, and profiles of notable Hispanics are presented. Chapter 3 describes how United States immigration policy has been affected by racism and xenophobia. Historically, Americans have been ambivalent about immigration, cherishing their immigrant heritage yet fearing new immigration, and a combination of quota systems, false rhetoric, and economic considerations have stimulated policies inconsistent with democratic ideals. The chapter also discusses the nature of "acculturation" in American society and focuses on Hispanic acculturation in particular. Chapter 4 identifies recurring themes in Federal immigration policy and reviews recent policy proposals. It is noted that immigration laws today affect Hispanics more than any other group, and recommendations are made for immigration reforms. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the basic themes of the report. A list of selected references is included. (KH)

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BEYOND ELLIS ISLAND:

HISPANICS —IMMIGRANTS AND AMERICANS

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The National Council of La Raza, one of the largest national Hispanic organizations, exists to improve life opportunities for the more than 20 million Americans of Hispanic descent. In addition to its Washington, D.C., headquarters, La Raza maintains field offices in Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Edinburg, Texas. It has four missions: technical assistance and capacity-building support to Hispanic community-based organizations, Hispanic entrepreneurs, and elected and appointed officials in communities with large Hispanic populations; applied research, policy analysis, and advocacy on behalf of all Hispanic Americans; public information activities designed to inform Hispanic communities and the broader American public about Hispanic status, needs, and concerns; and special catalytic projects to meet identified Hispanic needs. La Raza's primary constituency consists of nearly 85 affiliated Hispanic community-based organizations, located in 19 states and the District of Columbia. For more detailed information about immigration or other public policy issues, contact Emily McKay, Executive Vice President, or Charles Kamasaki, Director of Policy Analysis. Press should contact Debra Schiebel, Public Information Coordinator.

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HISPANICS —IMMIGRANTS AND AMERICANS

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June 1986

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To immigration scholars Julian Samora and Ernesto Galarza, two of the founders of the National Council of La Raza, whose work has inspired and influenced the work of the National Council in promoting public understanding of Hispanic immigration.

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PREFACE

Preparations for the one-hundredth anniversary of the Statue of Liberty, undertaken over the past several years, have helped to focus positive national attention on a basic fact of American history and culture—that, as historian Oscar Handlin put it, "America is a nation of immigrants and their descendants."

In the summer of 1986, the United States is celebrating its immigrant heritage, remembering the millions of people who have come here seeking both refuge and opportunity and the contributions made to America by these people and their descendants. Attention is focused on those who came through Ellis Island, but the organizers of the Statue of Liberty festivities have recognized that the appropriate scope of recollection and celebration is much broader, including immigrants who came before 1886 and those who entered this country by land or sea elsewhere than Ellis Island.

The Statue of Liberty celebration has special significance for Hispanic Americans, who represent both the first and many of the most recent immigrants. Yet the immigration experiences of Hispanic Americans and their contributions to this country have received little positive attention in the past few years. Moreover, the current controversies regarding immigration and language policy clearly demonstrate the need for better public understanding of the characteristics and contributions of Hispanics as immigrants and as Americans.

This document attempts to help fill that need by recalling the role of Hispanics in American history, describing their immigration patterns and experiences, and recounting their contributions to this nation. Past and current immigration policies are summarized, and their historical, economic, and attitudinal underpinnings analyzed. It is our intention to provide a historical and analytical perspective that may help to increase public knowledge about immigration in general and Hispanic immigration in particular, so that future policies may be enacted on the basis of facts and historical lessons rather than fears or ignorance.

The National Council of La Raza, one of the largest national Hispanic organizations, believes that the strength and continued vitality of this country require that the United States continue to welcome immigrants and refugees. This country's immigration policies can at one and the same time provide control of its borders and be humane and equitable. The lessons of our history demonstrate that it is in our best interest to keep the Statue of Liberty's torch lit, as a symbol of American freedom and opportunity.

Raúl Yzaguirre, President
National Council of La Raza

1

HISPANIC IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

- The Mexicans
- The Puerto Ricans
- The Cubans
- Other Hispanics

"La Raza — the Hispanic people of the New World"

Hispanic Americans are at once the oldest and newest immigrants to the United States. Hispanics who settled the Southwest long before the American Revolution became U.S. citizens through conquest during the last century, while recent immigrants from Latin America—like other newcomers to this nation of immigrants since colonial days—have arrived in search of political and religious freedom and economic opportunity. Many Hispanics have come to the United States in the century since the Statue of Liberty first raised her torch, but few entered this country through Ellis Island. While their roots reach back to Spain, most have come to the United States from other parts of the Western Hemisphere, arriving in this country more often by land than by sea.

The term *Hispanic American* is a recently developed identifier for a very diverse group of Americans, including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, other Central and South American, and Spanish descent, as well as other Latinos. The term *la raza*—literally "the race" or "the clan"—designates the Hispanic people of the New World, a new people combining the blood and the heritage of the Spanish, Native Americans, and Africans.

In 1985, 7.2% of the U.S. population was Hispanic. Among them are the descendants of people who colonized the New World before the English. While about three-fourths of Hispanics were born in one of the fifty states or Puerto Rico, Hispanics have also been a major U.S. immigrant and refugee group, especially during the past quarter century. Hispanics have in common their language and a shared ethnic heritage, but they also differ in nationality and culture. The major subgroups include Mexican Americans, who constitute 61% of Hispanics; Puerto Ricans, 15%; Cubans, 6%; other Central and South Americans, 10%; and other Hispanics, 8%. The 1980 census shows that about three-fourths of Mexican Americans, but only one-fourth of Cubans, are native-born. Data on Central and South Americans are

less complete, but it appears that less than one-third are native-born.

Hispanics in the United States may be native-born citizens, foreign-born persons who have become naturalized citizens, or legal immigrants with resident alien status. They may be legal refugees. Or they may be undocumented immigrants or refugees who have come here without legal sanction.

"About one-third of today's Mexican Americans are descended from the earliest settlers of the Southwest."

About one-third of today's Mexican Americans are descended from the earliest settlers of the Southwest and claim a heritage which includes the Spanish role in the exploration and colonization of the New World. Spain financed Christopher Columbus's voyage of discovery in 1492, and October 12, 1492, is still commemorated throughout Latin America as "El Dia de La Raza." Early explorers in the New World included many Spaniards, among them Pánfilo Narváez, who explored what is now Florida in 1528; Hernán Cortés, who sent out maritime expeditions that led to the discovery of the California peninsula in 1536; Hernando de Alarcón, who sailed up the Gulf of California to the mouth of the Colorado River in 1540; Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, who explored Arizona, New Mexico, and beyond around the same time; Juan Cabrillo, who discovered San Diego Bay in 1542; and Chamuscado and Rodrígues, who explored to Rio Grande valley and New Mexico in 1581.

The Spanish settled Latin America early in the sixteenth century, established what is now St. Augustine, Florida, in 1563, and began to colonize North America around the beginning of the seventeenth century. From these beginnings developed the Hispanic people of the Western Hemisphere. They came to the United States in varying ways over more than four centuries. Major patterns of immigration are described below for the various Hispanic subgroups. Greatest attention is given to Mexican immigration, since the majority of Hispanic Americans are of Mexican descent and Mexico is the primary source of recent Hispanic immigration to the United States.

THE MEXICANS

The first large group of Mexicans to become U.S. citizens attained that status during the period 1836–1853, when the northern half of the land area of Mexico became part of the United States.

These Mexican Americans were descendants of the Spaniards who first colonized the American Southwest. In 1598, New Mexico and Texas were settled and El Paso was founded under the leadership of Juan de Oñate. Santa Fe was established in 1609. Early colonization reached what are now the border states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and to a lesser extent California, but New Spain's effective control rarely extended more than 150 miles north of what is now the Mexican border. New Mexican settlements of Taos, Santa Fe, and Albuquerque were the exceptions. Most of the early settlers were *mestizos*, persons of mixed Spanish and Native American descent, sometimes with African blood as well. By 1760, there were an estimated 20,400 colonists in New Mexico, and just 2,400 in Texas

where settlers had to contend with hostile Comanches. Tucson was settled early, but the Apaches discouraged incursions beyond southern Arizona. The colonization of California did not begin until 1769, with the founding of the San Diego mission.

The Roman Catholic Church played a major role in the Spanish colonization of the Southwest, which typically included the establishment of missions along with forts, ranches, and villages, many of them mining towns.

Following the 1810 revolution led by Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, Mexico gained its independence in 1821. At this time, there were perhaps 73,500 Mexican settlers in the border states—60,000 in New Mexico, 5,000 in Texas, 1,000 in Arizona, and about 7,500 in California. During the Mexican national period that followed, the secularization of the missions resulted in control of these lands not by the Native Americans but by *criollo* (New World Spanish) landowners and a few *mestizos*. Most of the largest land grants in California were actually made during the Mexican, not the Spanish period.

Soon after Mexican independence, Anglo (white non-Hispanic) settlers began to move into the Southwest, especially Texas. In 1836, they declared the Republic of Texas. In 1846, under the banner of Manifest Destiny, the United States invaded Mexico. By the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican War, half the land area of Mexico, including Texas, California, most of Arizona and New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, was ceded to the United States. The treaty gave Mexican nationals one year to choose U.S. or Mexican citizenship; 75,000 Spanish-speaking persons chose to stay in the ceded territories—and became U.S. citizens by conquest.

"The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo made 75,000 Mexicans U.S. citizens by conquest"

It soon became evident that the treaty had been based on a faulty map, and James Gadsden was sent to Mexico City to negotiate the purchase of another 45,532 square miles, thus completing the U.S. acquisition of the Southwest.

As more Anglos came to settle the newly acquired lands, the Mexicans gradually became a minority population in the Southwest. The 1848 Gold Rush brought a flood of Anglo settlers to California, which became a state in 1850. Settlement in Arizona and New Mexico occurred more slowly, with statehood coming only in 1912, after railroads had overcome their geographic isolation.

Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed the property rights of existing landowners by reaffirming land grants which contained language and cultural protections, it did not explicitly state the language or cultural rights of these new U.S. citizens. Over the next half century, most southwestern states enacted language laws inhibiting Hispanic participation in voting, judicial processes, and the schools, and the Reclamation Act of 1902 dispossessed many Mexican Americans of their land. Only in New Mexico were the civil rights of the descendants of the original Spanish-speaking settlers protected.

Conditions of discrimination discouraged immigration to the United States in the late nineteenth century, but the United States had no

federal immigration statutes until 1875; entering the country without a visa did not become a punishable offense until 1929. Moreover, until very recently, the economy of the Southwest depended upon the availability of both capital and cheap labor. Mining and agriculture demanded large supplies of workers, and the region's irrigation farming and fruit orchards made survival difficult for small farmers. The construction of the railroads also increased the demand for low-wage workers by the 1890s. Thus, Mexican immigration to meet these needs was encouraged in the Southwest, especially after 1882, when U.S. immigration laws excluded Chinese immigrants.

Conditions in Mexico also encouraged immigration to the United States. By the turn of the century, expansion of very large ranches had led to the dispossession of many small farmers, and poverty and inflation were made worse by the considerable political repression under the dictatorship of President Porfirio Diaz. After the Mexican Revolution began in 1910, hundreds of thousands of people fled north from Mexico into the Southwest. Between 1910 and 1930, 10% of the population of Mexico immigrated to the United States; this included about 685,000 legal immigrants.

The immigrants of 1910–1930 were more diverse in their socioeconomic status than later Mexican immigrants; they included many political activists, professionals, and business owners as well as individuals with limited education and training. They were welcomed during most of this period because of the labor needs of an expanding U.S. economy. Special rules were developed in 1917 to permit the admission of "temporary" Mexican farmworkers, railroad maintenance workers, and miners, and up to two-thirds stayed in the United States. By the late 1920s, 80% of farmworkers in southern California were of Mexican descent.

With the coming of the Depression, Mexican workers were no longer welcome. During the period 1929–1934, more than 400,000 persons were "repatriated" to Mexico without formal deportation proceedings; thousands of U.S. citizens of Mexican descent were illegally deported.

With the onset of World War II, the United States once more needed workers, and Mexican immigration was again encouraged. In 1942 an arrangement was made with the Mexican government to supply temporary workers, known as *braceros*, for American agriculture. Formalized by legislation in 1951, the *Bracero* Program brought an annual average of 356,000 Mexican workers into the United States until it was ended in 1964 because of high domestic unemployment. Many of the *braceros* stayed in the United States.

Mexican Americans faced economic difficulties and discrimination because of the competition for jobs. Between 1954 and 1958, this negative feeling led to Operation Wetback, in which 3.8 million persons of Mexican descent were deported, fewer than 64,000 of them after deportation hearings. Thousands of U.S. citizens were among those arrested and detained. A cap on immigration from the Western

Hemisphere was enacted for the first time in 1965, becoming effective in 1968. However, there was no ceiling on the number of immediate family members of American citizens who were allowed to enter the country, and legal immigration from Mexico averaged more than 60,000 per year between 1971 and 1980.

In addition to legal immigrants, an increasing number of undocumented persons have entered the United States from Mexico in recent years. Estimates of the number of illegal immigrants are unreliable, because they depend upon incomplete census data and reports of apprehensions by immigration officials, which vary according to the personnel and procedures used; most undocumented persons apprehended are Mexicans, since most enforcement occurs in the United States–Mexican border region. In addition, many individuals are apprehended—and thus counted—more than once in a year. Between 1946 and 1950, there were about 240,000 Mexican apprehensions each year by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS); that number increased to 900,000 per year in the period 1976–1980. Informed estimates of the number of undocumented Mexican residents of the United States vary from 3 to 5 million. It is not clear what proportion of these individuals remain in the United States; there is some evidence that many return to Mexico after working in the United States for several years or go home to retire.

In the early 1980s, efforts to apprehend and deport illegal Mexican immigrants were once more stepped up; these efforts included a special enforcement program called Operation Jobs. Once more, there were reported violations of the civil rights of U.S. citizens and legal residents of Mexican descent.

"Mexico and the United States share a 2,000-mile common border"

A review of the history of Mexican immigration to the United States suggests several factors which differentiate it from other U.S. immigration. First, Mexico and the United States share a 2,000-mile common border which makes travel between the two countries easy; the border has never been sealed off. Second, immigration to what is now the United States from Mexico has continued for several hundred years but has reached major proportions only recently. Third, immigration has only recently been limited through formal quotas. Fourth, because of accessibility and because these two countries have the greatest disparity in per capita income of any two neighboring countries in the world, the pressures favoring immigration to the United States from Mexico are now considerable, and illegal movement is extremely widespread. Fifth, massive deportations have occurred during several historical periods, while Mexican immigration has been encouraged during other periods.

The question of immigration policy is inextricably intertwined with foreign policy. Mexican immigration to the United States has been greatest during times of economic or political upheaval in Mexico, and the United States has thus provided a certain stabilizing influence, or "safety valve." While large-scale immigration has been welcomed by the United States only during periods of economic growth and labor shortages, many American policy makers place great importance upon

avoiding any immigration policy changes that might threaten political stability or increase the threat of communist insurgency in Mexico.

Today, the Mexican American population is estimated at 10.3 million; this figure excludes some undocumented persons and those individuals living in New Mexico and southern Colorado who consider themselves not Mexicans but *Hispanos*, tracing their ancestry to the early settlers of New Spain.

THE PUERTO RICANS

Like the first Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans became U.S. citizens through conquest. In 1898, following the brief Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico became a U.S. possession through the Treaty of Paris, which ended 387 years of Spanish rule. While many assumed that annexation immediately made all Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens and entitled them to all the rights and privileges of citizenship, Puerto Ricans moving to the mainland sometimes found they were not permitted to register to vote. The Jones Act of 1917 finally resolved this problem, making all Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens. Since that time, Puerto Ricans, like other Americans, have had the unrestricted right of movement between the island and the mainland. By the early 1920s, there was a significant Puerto Rican community in New York, but large-scale migration to the mainland did not occur until after World War II.

"The Jones Act of 1917 made all Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens"

Initially Puerto Rico was a U.S. territory, but it became a commonwealth on July 25, 1952, with increased rights of self-government. Puerto Ricans do not pay federal taxes and do not enjoy full participation in federal human service programs. In the decades after Puerto Rico was annexed, mainland commercial interests injected huge amounts of capital into agricultural endeavors, creating large sugar plantations and forcing many small farmers to give up their land. The island gradually lost its subsistence economy, which contributed to migration to the mainland. Operation Bootstrap, begun in 1948, was intended to encourage industrial development on the island, but economic conditions have remained difficult, and some Puerto Rican researchers have observed that the influx of capital has resulted in an outflow of people.

Levels of migration from the island have varied with the economic conditions of Puerto Rico and the mainland. Until recently, census counts have been incomplete, but it is clear that most migration has occurred steadily since World War II. In 1940, there were only about 70,000 Puerto Ricans on the mainland. This number grew to 300,000 in 1950, 900,000 in 1960, about 1.4 million in 1970, 2 million in 1980, and 2.6 million in 1985.

"More Puerto Ricans live in New York than in any single city on the island"

Puerto Ricans came to the mainland after World War I as seasonal farmworkers, and during World War II as industrial workers. Since World War II, inexpensive air travel has facilitated movement between the island and the mainland. The amount of migration back and forth is extensive, with many Puerto Ricans coming to the mainland for economic opportunities, then moving back to the island when conditions improve there. Although large Puerto Rican communities have

developed since 1960 in Chicago, Boston, Newark, Philadelphia, and other northern cities, New York has remained the principal mainland destination. Today, more Puerto Ricans live in New York than in any single city on the island. An eroding industrial base has limited opportunities in the Frost Belt, but migration has continued, especially during periods of very high island unemployment. Because of low island wages and better mainland opportunities, not only unskilled and semiskilled workers but also Puerto Rican professionals have been attracted to the mainland. Island-trained nurses, teachers, and engineers are among those eagerly recruited by mainland employers.

As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans move freely throughout the United States and are increasingly moving from the Northeast to other parts of the country.

THE CUBANS

Cuba was briefly a U.S. possession after the Spanish-American War but became independent in 1902. A small number of Cubans migrated early to Tampa as cigar manufacturers, but in 1930, only about 19,000 Cubans lived in the United States, and the population had grown to only about 34,000 by 1950.

The vast majority of Cuban Americans have come to this country since 1959 in three distinct waves. After Fidel Castro took power, many Cuban professionals, businesspeople, managers, and government officials fled to the United States as refugees. Between 1959 and 1962, about 25,000 Cubans were "paroled" into the United States, using a special immigration status; not until 1965 did U.S. immigration law provide special refugee allocations. In 1966, the United States began airlifts from Cuba to the United States; 273,00 Cubans had arrived by 1973, when the airlifts were halted by Castro. This second wave was economically mixed but also included many well-educated middle- and upper-class Cubans. During the remainder of the 1970s, some Cubans continued to reach the United States, many of them through Latin America. Then in 1980, a "boatlift" of Cubans from Mariel Harbor was permitted, and up to 130,000 new refugees arrived in the United States. The *Marielitos* included a great variety of individuals. A small number were mentally ill persons and individuals who had been imprisoned in Cuba, but most were people who came here to work and start a new life, and many had relatives in the United States.

"The vast majority of Cubans have come to this country since Castro reached power"

The large majority of Cubans have become productive residents of Miami and surrounding Dade County in south Florida, although increasingly they live in other cities, especially New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, and Union City, New Jersey. Their population now totals about 1 million. While many of the early arrivals expected their stay in the United States to be temporary, the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and the continuation of the communist regime gradually convinced them that a quick return to Cuba was unlikely. They have become naturalized citizens at a higher rate than any other Hispanic immigrant group.

"Cubans have become naturalized citizens at a higher rate than any other Hispanic immigrant group"

OTHER HISPANICS

This broad category includes Hispanics from Latin American countries other than Mexico and Cuba, as well as those persons from Spain, the Caribbean, and the Philippines, and others who identify themselves as Hispanic. Like other immigrants to the United States, many of these persons have arrived during periods of political or economic upheavals in their countries of origin.

Thus at different times, waves of immigrants have arrived from Nicaragua, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and El Salvador, among other countries. More than half of these immigrants have come to the United States since 1970; less than one-third are native-born. Often, they have entered this country through Mexico. Some have entered under immigration quotas. Others originally came to the United States on tourist or student visas and then stayed in this country without legal status. Some Dominicans first obtained visas to visit Puerto Rico, then journeyed from there to New York. Those fleeing civil wars have often reached this country through circuitous and difficult routes.

"Recent immigration can be traced to economic and political conditions in the source countries"

Recent Central American immigration can be traced largely to economic and political conditions in the source countries, especially during the past two decades. The establishment of the Central American Common Market (CACM) and the growth of a manufacturing sector during the 1960s improved economic conditions in the region. Then in 1969, a border war between Honduras and El Salvador created instability, and in the early 1970s the CACM broke down and economic growth slowed. Many Central and South Americans have come to the United States in search of a better life for their families, but since 1979, political disturbances and the existence of armed resistance movements have contributed to large migrations to other Central American countries and the United States from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Many Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, and Salvadorans who have entered the United States in the past seven years consider themselves to be political refugees but have not been given that legal status. A time series analysis showed that human rights violations and political violence have been the dominant factor in Salvadoran immigration to the United States since 1979.

The number of Central and South Americans in this country in 1950 has been estimated at just 57,000. In 1985, a separate census count of Central and South Americans identified 1.7 million such persons, as well as 1.4 million "other Hispanics." This is almost certainly an undercount because it excludes many undocumented Central and South Americans, primarily Salvadorans. Estimates of the number of Salvadorans in the United States range as high as 500,000.

The Latin American population has increased greatly and become dispersed in recent years. Many of the nationality groups are concentrated in a few cities. For example, there are large numbers of Dominicans in New York City, Guatemalans in Los Angeles, and Salvadorans in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. The largest Colombian communities are in Miami, Los Angeles, and New York; perhaps the fastest growing is in Washington, D.C., and the oldest is in Chicago.

Nicaraguans live primarily in Miami, southern California, and San Francisco. There are large and varied Latin American communities in Washington, D.C., Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, as well as Miami. In San Francisco the Mission District, one of the oldest Hispanic communities in that city, now includes more Central and South Americans than Mexican Americans.

The number of Latin American immigrants, legal and illegal, can be expected to increase during periods of political and economic upheavals in Latin America. While this has been true of other groups of immigrants—Indochinese fleeing communism and civil war, Poles and other East Europeans fleeing communist repression, Haitians and Filipinos escaping dictatorships—Latin Americans are particularly likely to come to the United States during such periods because it can be reached overland, through Mexico, as well as by sea, and because its democratic government and economic strength offer hope for a better life.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS

— **Benefits of Immigration**
— **The Immigrant Profile**
— **Profiles of Hispanic Immigrants**

BENEFITS OF IMMIGRATION

Economists and historians agree that immigrants have made significant contributions to American society since the nation's inception, and these benefits continue today. Immigrants have overcome language barriers, difficulties in adapting to a new society and—all too often—fear and intolerance in their new home to make the country stronger, more productive, and culturally richer.

"Americans-by-choice have become some of this country's greatest achievers"

Since colonial times, immigrants and their descendants have enriched American life. Klaes Martensen Van Roosevelt, a Dutch peasant who came to America about 1649, is the direct ancestor of eight presidents, from James Madison to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. More recently, Edward Bok, who immigrated to the United States from Holland as a child, developed Curtis Publishing Company and some of the first "slick" general-audience magazines; his grandson, Curtis Bok, is now President of Harvard. Joseph P. Kennedy, son of an Irish immigrant, prospered in business and fathered President John F. Kennedy and Senators Robert and Edward Kennedy.

Foreign-born "Americans by choice" have become some of this country's greatest achievers in this century. For example:

— *Science:* More than 30% of American Nobel prizewinners now living are immigrants, as are 25% of the members of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

— *Music and the arts:* Actor Sidney Poitier (Jamaica), sculptor Louise Nevelson (Russia), dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov (Russia), writer Saul Bellow (Canada), and countless other luminaries are immigrants.

— *Government and public service:* Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (Germany), Minnesota Senator Rudy Boschwitz (Germany), California Congressman Mervyn Dymally (Trinidad, West Indies), and New York Congressman Theodore Weiss (Hungary) are naturalized citizens.

— *Business and industry:* Many past and present captains of industry came to this country as immigrants; they include such executives as W. Michael Blumenthal of Burroughs Corporation (Germany), Paul Oreffice of Dow Chemical (Italy), Charles Bluhdorn of Gulf + Western (Austria), and An Wang of Wang Laboratories (China).

— *Sports.* Many baseball and hockey stars are immigrants, as are tennis star Martina Navratilova (Czechoslovakia) and basketball stars Patrick Ewing (Jamaica) and Akeem Olajuwon (Nigeria).

"American culture is an amalgam of many other cultures"

In addition to individual contributions, immigrants have enriched American life by introducing ethnic foods (such as Chinese egg rolls, Greek souvlaki, Italian lasagna, Polish kielbasa, and Japanese sushi), genres of music (Caribbean salsa and Jamaican reggae), and clothing (ponchos from Peru, buttons from Pakistan, zippers from France, khaki from India, and silk from China and Japan). "American culture" is, in fact, an amalgam of many other cultures.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of immigrants, however, has been and remains economic. Economist Barry Chiswick has pointed out that while immigrants start out at a great disadvantage, in a matter of years many experience an "earnings crossover," catching up with and surpassing the native-born in earnings. The children of immigrants average 5 to 10% greater earnings than the children of native-born persons of the same age and educational level.

The net economic benefits to the society at large are staggering. According to one economist, when the stream of future costs and benefits of immigrants is measured in the same way that the "present value" of any investment is computed, the rate of return from immigrants to the citizen public is on the order of 40% per year. One economist projects that by 1990, annual U.S. economic growth will be about two-thirds of 1% greater than it would have been without the increases in immigration just since 1965.

THE IMMIGRANT PROFILE

While the phenomenon of international migration is complex and only partially understood, virtually all experts agree that the primary motivations for migration are economic and political. Many immigrant groups—from the Pilgrims to the Cubans—have come to the United States to escape religious or political persecution. Others, like the Italians and Japanese, have immigrated to the United States in search of economic opportunity. Still others, like the Irish and Haitians, have been motivated by a combination of these factors.

Actually, despite the fact that the United States has one of the richest economies and most open societies in the world, only a tiny fraction of potential immigrants ever tries to come here. One of the most surprising paradoxes about immigration to the United States is not that there has been so much, but that there has been so little. This is especially true for

Mexico. The disparity in income and civil liberties between Mexico and the United States has been significant during most of the years since the establishment of our southern border, yet only a tiny percentage of the Mexican population has ever sought to live in this country, even during periods when no laws restricted such immigration.

For the vast majority of people living in other countries, even the potential for a massively increased standard of living and the prospect of living in a more egalitarian and freer society do not lead to migration. What kinds of people, then, take the unusual step of leaving their homeland and moving to another country? Writer James Fallows suggests that:

"The single most important quality in immigrants is the willingness to adapt"

> The act of emigration is a kind of natural selection . . . . Compared with people who have not been forced to land on their feet, immigrants are generally more resourceful and determined. From an economic point of view, the immigrant's grit and courage, and even his anxieties, impart productive energy to the society he joins. The single most important quality in immigrants is the willingness to adapt.

PROFILES OF HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS

Researchers have long understood this truth. According to social scientists Peter Blau and Otis Duncan, "Geographic movement is associated with superior occupational achievement, regardless of place of birth or destination . . . . It appears that something either about immigration or about migrants themselves promotes occupational success." And economist John Kenneth Galbraith, himself an immigrant, concludes that "migration . . . is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help [and] it is good for the country to which they go."

In short, immigrants to the United States "do good by doing well." They themselves benefit from migration, while almost invariably improving the economy and enriching the culture of their new country. Our nation, meanwhile, "does well by doing good." By accepting immigrants, it lives up to its highest ideals, while at the same time guaranteeing itself a continuing influx of energetic, productive new "Americans by choice." This phenomenon has repeated itself throughout our history and continues today, as can be seen by examining the contributions of a few Hispanic immigrants.

"By accepting immigrants, our nation lives up to its highest ideals and guarantees a continuing influx of energetic, productive newcomers"

While Americans acknowledge the contributions of immigrants, negative stereotypes of Hispanic immigrants persist in spite of all evidence to the contrary. This is not a new phenomenon. Chinese and Japanese, Irish and Italian, Polish and Hungarian immigrants in earlier decades faced similar negative stereotypes during times of high immigration to the United States. Today, growing concern over undocumented immigration—especially from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America—has overshadowed the thousands of success stories of recent Hispanic immigrants. A few of these successful naturalized Americans are profiled below, grouped roughly by occupation.

GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE

HERMAN BADILLO The first native Puerto Rican ever elected as a voting member of Congress, Badillo was born in Caguas in 1929, orphaned at age 5, and came to New York to live with relatives in 1940. An honors graduate of the City College of New York, he worked as an accountant while attending Brooklyn Law School, where he distinguished himself on the *Law Review* and as class valedictorian. In 1961, he entered politics, narrowly losing a race for the state Assembly. After serving in a number of appointed positions, he ran—again unsuccessfully—for mayor of New York City; his unexpectedly strong showing paved the way for his election to Congress in 1970. He served four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, then served as deputy mayor of New York for policy in 1979. He now practices law in New York and teaches part-time at the university level.

EDWARD HIDALGO Former Secretary of the Navy Edward Hidalgo was born in Mexico City in 1912. He came to this country in 1918 and became a naturalized citizen in 1936. Throughout his life he has served both his adopted country and his native one. He holds law degrees from both countries, earning his J.D. from Columbia in 1936 and a similar degree from the University of Mexico Law School in 1959; he is a member of the bar in New York, Washington, D.C., and Mexico. He served in the U.S. Naval Reserves during World War II, was special assistant to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal in 1945–1946, and was a member of the Eberstadt Commission on Unification of the Military Services in 1945. He then returned to private law practice, in the United States and Mexico, until 1965, when he was named special assistant to Secretary of the Navy Paul Nitze. He later practiced law in Paris, then served as a senior official of the United States Information Agency. From 1977 to 1979 he served as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and from 1979 to 1981, was Secretary of the Navy.

PHILIP NEWMAN The first Mexican-born judge in the United States, Newman was born in Mexico City in 1916 to a German-American father and a Mexican mother. He fled with his family to southern California in the late 1920s during the Mexican civil war. Virtually destitute when he arrived in the United States, Newman's father, who had been a mining engineer in Mexico, worked as a laborer by day and studied law at night. Eventually Newman's father and later an elder brother received law degrees. After receiving his own law degree in 1941, Newman served in the Coast Guard in the North Pacific during World War II, returning to join the family law firm. A talented litigator, Newman won landmark cases protecting the rights of individuals against unwarranted searches and seizures and leading to changes in immigration law. Active in the Mexican American community, he was a founder of the Community Services Organization in Los Angeles, raised money for scholarships, and provided legal assistance. In 1964, he was named to a Los Angeles municipal judgeship by California Governor Edmund G. Brown. He was later elected to a term as judge, remaining on the bench until his retirement in 1982. He remains a practicing attorney in Los Angeles.

FRANKLIN CHANG-DIAZ The first Hispanic astronaut, Franklin Chang-Diaz was born in Costa Rica and attended the Colegio de la Salle in San Jose. A naturalized citizen, he received his bachelor's degree in 1973 from the University of Connecticut and his doctorate in applied plasma physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1977. Chosen as a scientist-astronaut in 1980, he flew as a member of the space shuttle crew in 1986, on the last mission before the Challenger disaster. His community involvement includes work in an experimental facility for deinstitutionalized mental patients and a rehabilitation program for Hispanic drug users.

SCIENCE

JÓRGE PRIETO The son of a prominent Mexican politician whose father was once mayor of Mexico City, physician Jórge Prieto came to the United States in 1920 when his father was exiled for speaking out against government policies. The family settled in Los Angeles, but Prieto returned to Mexico to complete his medical education. In 1951, married and with two children, he moved to Chicago, interned at Columbus Hospital, and subsequently opened a small family practice in an unused convent. He became an increasingly respected physician and in 1974 was named chair of the family practice department at Cook County Hospital, where he instituted aggressive minority recruitment policies to attract top women and minority health professionals. He also pioneered efforts to provide health care to the growing, predominantly poor, Hispanic population in Chicago by opening a series of satellite clinics. In 1984, Prieto became president of the Chicago Board of Health, and he now lectures at the University of Chicago and University of Illinois medical schools. Throughout his career, Prieto has affirmed his commitment to his community by maintaining his convent-based medical practice.

ROBERTO GOIZUETA Chairman and chief executive officer of Coca-Cola since 1981, Roberto Goizueta is a Cuban immigrant. Born in Havana in 1931, he attended school in the United States, graduating from Yale in 1953; he served as technical director for Coca-Cola in Havana from 1954 to 1960 and worked for four years for Coca-Cola in Nassau, the Bahamas, leaving Cuba permanently in 1961. He moved to Atlanta from Nassau and has been at corporate headquarters for more than 20 years. He is the only Hispanic heading a Fortune 500 corporation.

BUSINESS

RUBÉN SALAZAR One of the first Mexican American journalists to achieve prominence in the mainstream media, Rubén Salazar was born in 1928 in Chihuahua, Mexico; his family moved to El Paso when he was a baby. He served two years in the Army, became a naturalized citizen, graduated from the University of Texas, and sought a career as an investigative reporter. Starting at the El Paso *Herald-Post*, he reached the *Los Angeles Times* in 1959, covering first the war in Vietnam, then Latin America, serving for two years on the *Times'* Mexico City desk, and returning to Los Angeles to cover Mexican American affairs. He

JOURNALISM

became an award-winning columnist for the paper and was also named news director for KMEX-TV, the local Spanish-language television station. His brilliant career was cut short on August 29, 1970, when he was covering the National Chicano Moratorium Day Committee's march to protest the war in Vietnam. Violence erupted, and he was killed by a tear gas projectile as he sat in a small café in East Los Angeles.

ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS

MIRIAM COLÓN A successful stage, television, and film actress, Miriam Colón was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico; she was starring in school plays by age 11 and in University of Puerto Rico traveling theater productions before she finished high school. Sent to New York on a special scholarship to study acting, she eventually became the first Puerto Rican accepted at the Actor's Studio. Stage roles soon brought her to the attention of Hollywood, and she starred opposite Marlon Brando in *One-Eyed Jacks* and *The Appaloosa*. Her roles have ranged from Hawaiian Queen Lilioukalani in the public television production of *Queen's Destiny* to Calpurnia in a New York Shakespeare Festival production of *Julius Caesar*, as well as "little ethnic girls, prostitutes, or some other grieving woman" in various television dramas. One of the pioneers of the Hispanic theatrical movement in New York City, she was a cofounder of Nuevo Círcula Dramático, the first Spanish-language arena theater in New York City. In 1967, she founded the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, a bilingual theater group located in a former firehouse in the heart of the Broadway area, which performs Puerto Rican, Latin American, and contemporary world drama. She has served as the theater's artistic director, strategist, and fund raiser since its inception, obtaining private-sector and government support for its varied components. The touring unit provides free performances in the parks, playgrounds, streets, and churches of low-income communities. The training unit brings together working professionals who provide theater training to low-income teenagers at no cost, and the playwrights unit helps beginning and advanced playwrights to learn their discipline. Miriam Colón has served on the New York State Council on the Arts and on the Expansion Arts Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts, and her many achievements include several honorary doctorates.

JOSÉ LIMÓN Dancer-choreographer José Limón was born in Sinaloa, Mexico, in 1908, the son of a musician. The family moved to the United States when he was 7 years old, and he lived first in Arizona and then in Los Angeles. Planning to be an artist, Limón attended both UCLA and the New York School of Design and then decided this was not the career for him. Inspired by a modern dance performance in the late 1920s, he decided to become a dancer, and by 1930 he was performing in a chorus line on Broadway. By 1931, he had begun choreographing as well, first working on Broadway but later devoting his skills to concert dance. Within a decade, he was recognized as a major talent. The José Limón Company gave performances throughout the world

over several decades. Once offered the directorship of the National Academy of Dance in Mexico, he declined, preferring his independent work in the United States. He joined the faculty of the Juilliard School and in 1964 became artistic director of the American Dance Theater. Long before his death in 1972, he was recognized as one of the greatest dancer-choreographers of modern dance.

RITA MORENO Born Rosa Dolores Alverio in Humacao, Puerto Rico, actress-dancer Rita Moreno came to New York with her parents at age 5 and began performing as a Spanish dancer when she was 7. After she had worked as a nightclub entertainer, played bit parts on Broadway, dubbed film voices in Spanish, and done dramatic roles on radio, her career began to take off in 1949. After a film debut in 1950, she appeared in many movies, earning an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in 1962 for *West Side Story*. Finding herself repeatedly "stereotypecast" as a Latin spitfire, she left Hollywood the next year, appearing in dramatic roles in plays in London, Chicago, and New York. Eventually gaining respect as an actress as well as a dancer, she has continued to appear on television, on Broadway, and in movies. She is the only U.S. performer to have won Academy, Grammy, Tony, and Emmy awards.

ANTHONY QUINN Actor Anthony Rudolph Quinn, son of an Irish father who fought for Pancho Villa and a Mexican mother of Aztec ancestry, was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1915. Smuggled out of Mexico to El Paso during the Mexican Revolution, Quinn soon moved to Los Angeles with his parents. His father was killed in an accident when he was 9 years old, and Quinn found part-time jobs to help support himself and his mother. Holding a variety of positions, he worked to correct a speech impediment, and at 19 he began acting in a little theater group. His film career began when he was 21, and his memorable movies have included *Zorba the Greek*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, and *Requiem for a Heavyweight*. He has appeared in more than 100 films and received two Academy Awards. He has also acted on Broadway, written his autobiography, and helped support and encourage Hispanic actors through an organization called Nosotros.

RELIGION

JUAN ALFREDO ARZUBE Auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles since 1971, Father Arzube was born in Ecuador in 1918. He first came to the United States to study civil engineering and moved here permanently in 1944. In 1945 he decided to become a priest. He was ordained in 1954 and served in many posts in East Los Angeles and in other central-city parishes. Since 1971, he has served as Episcopal vicar for the Spanish-speaking in Los Angeles. The first native Ecuadorean ever to serve in the United States Catholic hierarchy, he has been deeply involved with the Hispanic community throughout his priesthood.

SPORTS

ROBERTO CLEMENTE Baseball star Roberto Clemente was born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, and signed by an island baseball team when he was just 17. In 1953, the Brooklyn Dodgers signed him with a $10,000 bonus, then the largest ever paid to a Hispanic player. After an unhappy year with the Dodgers, he was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1954, quickly earning a reputation as a right fielder with a shotgun arm. After 1960, he was even better known for his bat, and his season average never again dropped below .312, though he played in constant pain from a back injury suffered in a 1954 auto accident. He was voted Most Valuable Player in 1966 and helped the Pirates to a World Championship in 1971, batting .414 in the World Series. An intense, self-driving man, he often suffered from insomnia and expected perfection from himself. Always concerned with helping others, he led a drive for aid for Nicaraguan earthquake victims in December 1972; he died when a plane loaded with relief supplies crashed at sea on December 31.

These distinguished Hispanic Americans came from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. Their ethnic backgrounds are varied. Some immigrated to the United States as infants; others came as adults. They arrived for a variety of reasons, some fleeing political persecution or turmoil, others seeking economic opportunities.

They all have several important characteristics in common. They or their families chose to become Americans (in the case of island Puerto Ricans, to come to the mainland). They made a deliberate decision to uproot themselves physically and culturally and face the difficulties of adaptation to a new society. All had to overcome personal obstacles, and all made great demands on themselves. All achieved personal prominence while contributing their skills and hard work to their adopted country. All possessed the ability to adapt and the drive to succeed. They share these characteristics with many thousands of other immigrants who have come to the United States in recent years and contributed to its economic strength and cultural richness.

BECOMING AMERICAN

- Racism and Xenophobia in U.S. Immigration Policy
- The Question of Acculturation
- Hispanic Acculturation
- Proof of Americanism

RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

Americans have always been ambivalent about immigration, cherishing their immigrant heritage while at the same time fearing new immigration. According to sociologist Charles Keely of the Population Council:

"Americans have always been ambivalent about immigration"

> On the one hand, the country has historically been a place of refuge, a place of new beginnings, accepting and even recruiting new settlers to build the nation and its economy. On the other hand, the theme of protectionism has found recurrent expression in the capacity of the culture and economy to absorb newcomers, in the desire to limit labor market competition and assure minimal health standards, and even in nativism and racist theories. The history of immigration policy is a dialectic of these two themes of acceptance and protection.

These two themes have dominated immigration policy debates from the birth of the nation. With rare exceptions, however, major changes in immigration policy have resulted when protectionism is in the ascendancy. Public opinion polls dating back to the late 1800s confirm that the protectionist or restrictionist view has almost always commanded a majority of popular opinion. A brief recounting of immigration policy illustrates the dangers of succumbing to popular pressure to scapegoat newcomers.

Until 1875, the United States had a neutral immigration policy, with few restrictions on people seeking to enter. The absence of federal immigration laws did not mean that there was no desire to limit immigration, however. For example, high levels of German immigration were viewed with great suspicion, even among some of the founding fathers. Benjamin Franklin had "great misgivings about Germans because of their clannishness, their little knowledge of English, the German press, and the increasing need of interpreters. . . . I suppose in a few years [interpreters] will also be needed in the Assembly, to tell one-half of our legislators what the other half say." This concern eventually led to

some state legislation forbidding instruction in the German language. And in the early 1800s, fear of papal domination led to substantial anti-Catholic sentiment, often resulting in discrimination against Irish immigrants fleeing famine in their native land. From 1850 until the Civil War, the so-called Know-Nothing political party campaigned successfully on an explicitly racist, anti-immigrant platform.

In 1876, a Supreme Court ruling vested all power to regulate immigration in the federal government. By 1920, Congress had enacted about a dozen major immigration laws, most of which were "qualitative," that is, they sought to restrict certain kinds of individuals but did not attempt to reduce the total volume of immigration. These laws excluded criminals, persons with chronic diseases, and those with unacceptable moral or political beliefs.

Some of the laws were directed at specific ethnic groups and reflected unfounded, often blatantly racist, fears. The first of these was a series of laws, now known as the Chinese Exclusion Acts, that were passed in response to fears in the western United States of a "yellow peril." These laws, enacted in the late 1800s and early 1900s, virtually ended immigration from Asia, prevented Asian immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens, restricted their rights to own real property, and denied Asian immigrants the opportunity to reunite with family members abroad.

In 1924 the national origin quota acts became the foundation of immigration law. These laws placed a ceiling on immigration and allocated visas based on the ethnic origin of the U.S. population. The passage of the quota laws coincided with, and was stimulated by, fear of what was then known as the "new immigration." Unlike previous immigrant waves, which had been composed primarily of people from northern and western Europe (English, Irish, German, French), the latest wave consisted largely of people from southern and eastern Europe (Italians, Russians, Austrians, Hungarians, Jews). At the time, these people were widely feared as "inferior" and "unassimilable," views which led directly to the establishment of the quota system.

Mexican Americans have been the target of such policies as well. As noted earlier, in the 1930s, and later in the 1950s, fears of the so-called wetback menace led to the wholesale deportation of almost 4.5 million persons of Mexican descent, many of whom were actually citizens or legal resident aliens. At the height of Operation Wetback, over 1 million Mexican Americans were deported in a single year.

Just prior to World War II, anti-Semitism led to the exclusion of many Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution. The restrictions on naturalization of Asians also meant that tens of thousands of Japanese immigrants were immediately classified as enemy aliens after Pearl Harbor. Unjustified fears of a fifth column led to the internment of some 110,000 citizens and resident aliens of Japanese descent, an act that a government commission has characterized as "among the most shameful in our history."

These incidents have much in common. In each case inflammatory

and patently false rhetoric warning of "unassimilable" or "disloyal" groups combined with economic considerations to stimulate policies wholly inconsistent with the notion that "all men are created equal." In each case fears of, and policies directed at, immigrants spilled over to affect native-born citizens of that ethnic or nationality group as well. And finally, in each case fundamental rights of due process and equal protection were subverted.

The quota system was retained in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, better known as the McCarran-Walter Act, which reduced—but did not eliminate—the differential treatment of immigrants based on race. President Harry F. Truman, over whose veto the McCarran-Walter Act was passed, noted at the time:

"False rhetoric combined with economic considerations to stimulate policies wholly inconsistent with the notion that all men are created equal"

> [The] quota system—always based upon assumptions at variance with our American ideals—is long since out of date. . . . The idea behind this policy was, to put it boldly, that Americans with English or Irish names were better people and better citizens than Americans with Italian or Greek or Polish names. . . . Such a concept is utterly unworthy of our traditions and our ideals. It violates the great political doctrine of the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal". . . . It is incredible to me that, in this year of 1952, we should again be enacting into law such a slur on the patriotism, the capacity, and the decency of a large part of our citizenry.

The Immigration Act of 1965, later amended in 1976, eliminated the national origins quota and replaced it with a policy that distributed visas based primarily on the concept of family reunification. It established ceilings of 20,000 visas per country and provided a worldwide annual immigration ceiling of 290,000. Close family relatives are exempted from the ceilings, and recent legal immigration has averaged between 500,000 and 600,000 annually.

In recent decades, a growing portion of new immigrants has come from Latin America and Asia, partially as a result of more equitable immigration policies passed in 1965. As has consistently occurred throughout our history, the changing racial and ethnic character of new immigrants has sparked widespread concern and controversy over immigration policy. It is critical that the legacy of racism and xenophobia not be ignored, for these same themes underlie much of the current debate over immigration reform and much of the current public concern about the "new immigration" of the 1970s and 1980s.

THE QUESTION OF ACCULTURATION

Much of the protectionism in American attitudes toward immigration is based on fear of "different" ethnic and nationality groups—people the public believes may not become "real Americans." While a part of this fear and mistrust stems from active racism and nativism, much of it is rooted in ignorance and a lack of historical perspective. The descendants of most of the feared immigrants of the nineteenth century have become the respected mainstream Americans of today. More than

a century ago, Germans were a culturally distinct, and therefore a threatening, immigrant group; today, more than one-fifth of all Americans claim some German ancestry.

The process of acculturation was probably never as rapid as it appears to us in retrospect; it has usually taken several generations. However, today's mass media increase immigrant visibility and therefore may create unwarranted concerns. A century ago, the arrival of immigrants from east Europe was evident primarily in the cities where they settled. Today, the evening news makes Americans in every part of our nation aware of new Indochinese immigrants in California or Cubans in Florida. The short-term visibility of new immigrants with their distinctive language and culture can make native Americans uneasy, but over the long term, the effects of acculturation and time make these immigrants and their children and grandchildren less identifiable and more familiar. We do not notice them because they have become a part of American society.

The experience of history and the evidence of recent research both indicate that today's immigrants, like their predecessors, will become tomorrow's accepted Americans.

"There is no homogeneous American culture. The melting pot was always part myth."

Immigrants become a part of American society by a process of acculturation. Typically, they do not totally assimilate; they do not lose their culture entirely and become part of a homogeneous existing culture in their new country. In fact, there is no homogeneous American culture. The melting pot was always part myth; if it existed, it would probably be incredibly boring, compared to the vibrancy and variety of American society. When differing cultures come into long-term contact, changes occur in both; the dominant culture changes least, but the acculturation process requires some adaptation by everyone. What results is a changing, developing society that adopts the strengths of its varied ethnic components.

Each major immigrant group over the past two centuries has contributed to, and enriched, American culture. The value of immigration was recognized even earlier, by the framers of our democracy. As James Madison noted during the Constitutional Convention: "That part of America which has encouraged them [immigrants] the most has advanced most rapidly in population, agriculture, and the arts."

"The hyphen in ethnic-American designations connects; it need not separate"

Our pluralistic society has been identified in recent years as a salad bowl or a stew; it was more eloquently described by Horace Kallen and John Dewey as an orchestra, in which the different instruments play in harmony. From music to food to crafts, the United States is a patchwork of unique ethnic components which complement each other. Kallen and Dewey also note that the hyphen sometimes used in ethnic American designations—Mexican-American, Italian-American—connects; it need not separate.

Alexis de Tocqueville considered Americans unique in their ability to set aside their individualism when necessary for the greater good; for example, when a neighbor's barn burned down, the neighbors helped to build another. He considered Americans more able to tolerate and

accept differences and less xenophobic than other peoples, attributing this to their recognition that because they were all members of different ethnic groups they themselves could be targets; he viewed this recognition as "self-interest rightly understood."

The motto of the United States, *E pluribus unum* ("from many, one"), reflects the American confidence that diversity can strengthen unity. In spite of tremendous ethnic and racial variation—or perhaps because of it—Americans are an identifiable people not because of how they look, but because of the political values they share. To "become American" is not to lose all ethnic heritage, but adopt and share certain basic beliefs. Lawrence Fuchs, former executive director of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, made this point:

"To become American is not to lose all ethnic heritage, but to adopt and share certain basic beliefs"

> The genius of the American system has been that loyalty to the United States is compatible with other ties of affection—regional, local, religious, and ethnic. The ties which bind Americans are the ideals of individual freedom and equality of opportunity, regardless of ethnicity or other social characteristics.

These beliefs have been adopted and treasured by immigrants and their children for more than 200 years, regardless of their native language or place of birth.

HISPANIC ACCULTURATION

Most Americans accept these concepts of acculturation and recognize that ours has always been a nation of immigrants. Our veneration for the Statue of Liberty reflects pride in our pluralism and our immigrant heritage. Yet many Americans also fear that today's immigrants will be different from those who have come before them, that they will not become a part of American culture.

One stated cause for concern is the relatively small number of nationality groups which currently make up most of the recent immigrant population. Recent immigrants and refugees are predominantly Hispanic (Mexican, Cuban, and Salvadoran) and Asian (Filipino, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian). Yet historically, immigration during any single year or decade has always been dominated by just a few nationality groups. Starting in 1821, and for the next four decades, at least 35% of new immigrants to the United States were Irish. From the 1830s through the 1880s, Germans constituted at least 25% of all immigrants. Mexicans today constitute about 13 to 14% of legal immigrants and perhaps 50% of undocumented entrants; even if the largest estimates are used, Mexicans probably constitute less than 25% of total immigrants today. The actual proportion of immigrants is far lower if we exclude the large number of Mexican entrants who do not plan to stay in the United States permanently.

"There are proportionately fewer foreign-born people in the United States now than during almost any prior period in our history"

Another cause for fear has been the seemingly large number of immigrants in recent years. In fact, there are proportionately fewer foreign-born people in the United States now than during almost any earlier

period in our history. Between 1860 and 1920, for example, the foreign-born never dropped below 13% of the total population. In 1980, the figure was 6.2%. In a 1908 survey of 37 U.S. cities, a U.S. Senate immigration commission found that 60 nationalities were represented in the school population and that 58% of all students had fathers born outside the United States. Even if Latin American immigration, legal and illegal, were to double for the next 60 years, Hispanics would still constitute only 18% of the population at the end of that time (they now constitute at least 7.2%). Notes Fuchs: "Only those who lack confidence in the acculturation power of American society could give a second thought to the idea that the number of foreign entries in recent years by itself constitutes a threat to American unity."

"The legitimate concern is not whether people speak their native language, but whether they learn English"

Concerns about acculturation frequently show themselves in public worries about whether new immigrants will learn English. Too often, this translates into a fear of bilingualism. In fact, having Americans who can speak two or more languages is not a threat; even poorly educated people in many countries speak at least two languages, as do educated persons in nearly all European countries. The legitimate concern is not whether people speak their native language, but whether they learn English. Historically, immigrants have tended to learn some English but speak their native language better, and their children have typically been bilingual. Their grandchildren, however, have almost always been English-dominant, and the native language has largely disappeared by the fourth generation. A recent study of the French-speaking community in the United States indicates that language shifts may be occurring even more rapidly—that children of immigrants generally are English-dominant and use French only occasionally. The research also indicates that this language shift occurs more quickly in the United States than in other countries. Many experts concerned with world economic interdependence believe that such loss of language represents a serious waste of national resources, but it has been—and remains—the norm.

"Hispanics follow the same acculturation process as other immigrants"

Available information indicates that Hispanics follow the same acculturation process as other immigrants. Several studies have concluded that by the third generation, the vast majority of Hispanic Americans are English-dominant. Recent surveys in San Antonio and Los Angeles found that 89% of Mexican American citizens were bilingual or spoke only English; for those 18 to 25 years of age the figure was 94%. A recent study by the Rand Corporation found that 90% of the Mexican American children of immigrants in California were proficient in English, and more than half of their children were monolingual English speakers. The study concluded that "the transition to English begins almost immediately and proceeds very rapidly."

This fact, however, is not always obvious, because there is significant new immigration; in communities with large Hispanic populations, new arrivals whose primary language is Spanish are much in evidence. As with earlier immigrant groups, the children and grandchildren of

immigrants, speaking English, are far less visible. In addition, there is considerable movement between the United States and Puerto Rico and Latin America, which tends to encourage language maintenance. Puerto Ricans, who move freely between the island and the mainland, are educated in Spanish on the island and in English on the mainland, and many Mexican Americans retain family ties south of the border because of the proximity of their homeland. For earlier immigrants, especially before the advent of air travel and international long-distance telephone systems, continued contact with their native country was far less likely.

Recent immigrants also face real obstacles in their quest to learn English. Only a minority of limited-English-proficient children receive special language services in school. Adult literacy programs have been severely reduced because of federal budget cuts, and almost no existing programs are geared to limited-English-proficient adults. There are far too few English as a second language programs for adult immigrants, and the result is that hundreds of thousands of new immigrants who want to learn English find it difficult to do so.

An often unspoken but very real public fear is that, rather than acculturating, Hispanic immigrants, especially Mexicans, will pursue a goal of separatism, perhaps seeking to reunite the southwestern states with Mexico. Parallels with Quebec are often drawn, but most expert observers believe that the two situations are totally dissimilar. In fact, no national Hispanic organization or leader supports such separatism, and Hispanic groups are unanimous in their advocacy of additional opportunities to learn English. People of Mexican origin do not constitute anything approaching a majority of the population in any state except New Mexico (36%), and they are increasingly dispersed. Nor do Mexican Americans face anything approaching the religious, linguistic, political, or historical differences which separate English-speaking from French-speaking Canadians. Throughout the United States, Hispanic leaders seek increased opportunities for Hispanics to join the economic mainstream.

"Hispanic groups are unanimous in advocating for additional opportunities for Hispanics to learn English"

Sometimes fear of bilingualism can lead to policies which make acculturation more difficult. For example, federal bilingual education programs are deliberately transitional, designed to help limited-English-proficient children learn English and prevent them from falling behind in subject matter while they do so. Because of the fear that bilingual education programs will somehow keep children from learning English, attempts have been made to eliminate these programs and replace them with English-only programs. The first-year results from a four-year study commissioned by the Department of Education indicate that children enrolled in late-exit bilingual education programs scored better in both English and subject-matter tests than those in early-exit bilingual programs, and that both these groups scored above children in English-only immersion programs. Language experts believe this is because concepts learned in the native language transfer to the second

language, with the result that bilingual children have superior cognitive skills.

Bilingual ballots are also sometimes attacked as preventing acculturation. In fact, available evidence indicates that one of the best ways of "Americanizing" immigrants is by helping them to participate in the political process. Bilingual ballots and assistance not only help native-born Americans who had limited educational opportunities but also encourage new citizens who are not fully English-proficient to become involved. One of the requirements of naturalization is some capacity in English, but for many older immigrants, extra help is needed at the ballot box. Such participation helps show new Americans that representative democracy is a reality, not just an ideal, in the United States.

Sometimes, other Americans express concern that Hispanics don't seem to become part of the mainstream quickly enough. This typically occurs not as a result of Hispanic preferences but because of a legacy of discrimination. Hispanics face special obstacles to acculturation, primarily because most are recognizable minorities who may encounter discrimination in housing, education, employment, and other areas of life. They must overcome the effects of limited opportunities which have kept both native-born and immigrant Hispanics concentrated in certain neighborhoods and denied them full political and economic access. Making Hispanics part of the mainstream requires eliminating discrimination and encouraging full Hispanic participation in American society.

Given such opportunities, "the behavior of the children and grandchildren of Hispanic-ethnic immigrants . . . tends to veer sharply toward middle-class norms," according to studies reported by the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy.

PROOF OF AMERICANISM

Perhaps the best proof of loyalty and Americanism on the part of Hispanics can be found in the stated beliefs and actions of Hispanic Americans. All available attitude surveys show an exceptionally high level of patriotism among Hispanic Americans, and this is reflected in their behavior. Puerto Ricans have consistently been overrepresented as members of our Armed Forces. As Henry Ramos has noted in his history of the American G.I. Forum, a national Hispanic veterans group, Hispanics were overrepresented on military casualty lists in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Seventeen Mexican Americans received the Congressional Medal of Honor for action in World War II and Korea; this represents the highest proportion of Medal winners for any identifiable ethnic group, a distinction that continued in Vietnam. During World War II, not a single Spanish-surnamed soldier was reported to have deserted or was ever charged with cowardice or treason. Like the 442nd Regional Combat Team, made up of Japanese Americans, the predominantly Mexican American 36th Combat Divi-

"Mexican Americans have the highest proportion of Congressional Medal of Honor winners of any identifiable ethnic group"

sions of Texas distinguished themselves in World War II; the 36th had the highest casualty rate of any division.

More recently, two of the 52 Iranian hostages in 1980–1981 were Hispanics. Marine Sergeant Jimmy Lopez wrote a message in Spanish on the wall of the room in which he was imprisoned: "Viva el rojo, blanco, y azul" ("Long live the red, white, and blue").

"Viva el rojo, blanco, y azul — Iranian hostage Marine Sergeant Jimmy Lopez"

THE IMMIGRATION POLICY DEBATE

- Themes in Immigration Policy
- Recent Policy Proposals
- Hispanics and Immigration Reform
- Broader Issues: World Interdependence

THEMES IN IMMIGRATION POLICY

In spite of ample evidence that Hispanics are "good Americans," the high level of recent illegal immigration from Mexico, El Salvador, and other Latin American nations has fueled continuing debate about the nation's immigration policies. This has led not only to ethnic-related public fears but also to legitimate and serious debate about our ability to enforce existing immigration laws and about the need for immigration reform.

"Recent national debate has focused on illegal immigration"

Recent national debate has focused on illegal immigration. Beginning in the early 1970s, Congress, along with the Nixon and Ford administrations, assembled high-level commissions to study, report on, and propose solutions to the problem. On several occasions, immigration reform legislation passed the House only to stall at the committee level in the Senate. In an effort to forge consensus on this difficult issue, President Jimmy Carter appointed the bipartisan Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy. The commission went through hundreds of reports on trends in immigration and their effects on the nation and held a long series of hearings throughout the country.

By the early 1980s, public perception of a large increase in numbers of immigrants and refugees, fueled by press accounts of the Mariel Cuban boatlift and a surge in Indochinese refugee admissions, brought about calls for action from Congress, private officials, and community leaders. Their calls were echoed in the commission's final report, issued in April 1983 and entitled *U.S. Immigration Policy in the National Interest:* "The United States is disturbed by immigration. The very fact that so many come outside of the law or abuse their nonimmigrant visas is troubling in a nation which prides itself on respect for law generally, and for its legal immigration system specifically." Release of the report sparked debate on immigration policy that has continued until the present.

Once separated from the fear and deception of racist sentiments, the current immigration policy debate involves three key themes: the

need to control our borders, the economic interests of the country, and the rule of law. Each theme reflects valid concerns over immigration policy and practice.

CONTROLLING OUR BORDERS

There is genuine concern over the nation's ability to humanely control immigration at its borders. Press accounts and reports from the INS border patrol sound alarms of an "invasion from the South." "Coyotes"—alien smugglers—take ruthless advantage of frightened men, women, and children. Increasingly, so-called border bandits terrorize unsuspecting border-crossers, taking their few belongings and little cash, and sometimes their lives. As the number of undocumented immigrants caught at the southern border rises, so does the nation's concern over regaining control of the rate of immigration. There is also illegal immigration from the north, but the numbers are smaller, and there is a higher proportion of native English speakers who "look like Americans."

"Border enforcement must be equitable and must maintain our open society"

If the United States is to maintain an immigration policy consistent with the American notion of an open society while at the same time limiting immigration to serve the national interest, we must control immigration. But border enforcement must also be equitable and must maintain our open society; limits must never be imposed by reason of color, nationality, or religion, and those who are admitted must have full rights of participation in U.S. society. The challenge, then, is to step up border enforcement in a fair and humane way. This theme of border control is central to the current debate over illegal immigration.

ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY

Economics are a key force behind illegal immigration as well as a major cause for American concern about it. In much of Mexico, especially in rural areas, finding employment is extremely difficult, and a job pays only a small fraction of the minimum wage in the United States. Similar economic pressures encourage immigration from other countries, but illegal immigration is most practical for Mexicans and Central Americans who can reach the United States by land. North of the border, certain U.S. industries depend upon undocumented laborers, who work hard for very low pay and who very seldom complain. Thus, illegal immigration is welcomed by many employers. As history demonstrates, the United States typically welcomes immigrants in times of economic growth and labor shortages, and repels them during economic hard times.

"Today's fiercest immigration debates are over the economic effects of illegal immigration"

Today's fiercest immigration debates are over the economic effects of illegal immigration. Some argue that undocumented workers steal jobs from native workers and that social service abuse by the undocumented population costs the country billions of dollars annually. Others argue that job displacement does not occur—or occurs only on a small scale and in certain specific communities—because the undocumented work at jobs that legal workers would never take. They also argue that the undocumented make almost no use of public assistance programs.

Immigration policy should take into account the nation's economic interests by carefully examining U.S. labor needs and the actual effects of illegal immigration on native workers and the economy.

A final theme in the immigration debate is the concept of rule of law. Once our nation's policy is set, immigration law must be enforced fairly and effectively. Lawrence Fuchs has written that the presence of large numbers of undocumented aliens

RULE OF LAW

"Once policy is set, immigration law must be enforced fairly and effectively"

> . . . makes those who feel most vulnerable—the young, blacks, and others in the secondary labor market particularly—feel even more exploited. It outrages U.S. citizens and resident aliens who, having petitioned for the admission of their relatives under our . . . laws, must wait for years because of the limits imposed. It places within the American polity a large group of people who often are afraid to cooperate with the law to protect themselves against criminal activity. And finally, it perpetuates an underclass of mostly foreign aliens whose presence retards the acculturation of immigrant-ethnic groups to which they belong, consigning certain kinds of people as fit only for certain kinds of work, a situation which eats at the very heart of the principle of opportunity regardless of ethnicity.

This is perhaps the most urgent problem posed by illegal immigration. Our immigration policies must, above all, re-establish and maintain the rule of law.

These themes have been translated into a wide range of immigration reform proposals. In 1981 and again in 1982, Senator Alan K. Simpson (R-WY) and Congressman Romano Mazzoli (D-KY) introduced legislation which incorporated the Select Commission's major policy recommendations. Although extensively debated in Congress and throughout the nation, these proposals were never enacted into law. In 1986, five years after the first time that the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill was introduced, Representative Peter Rodino (D-NJ) is chief sponsor of immigration legislation in the House. Despite the power and respect commanded by Representatives Simpson and Rodino, the complexities involved in forging consensus around immigration reform remain.

CURRENT POLICY PROPOSALS

The commission outlined a two-pronged approach to the problem of illegal immigration. Commissioners urged that penalties for employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers be established, and that Congress simultaneously provide for the adjustment of status, or legalization, of some undocumented immigrants already in the country. Legislative proposals have added to this basic formula provisions for temporary-worker programs, which would allow short-term importation of foreign laborers to work in agricultural industries. These proposals lie at the heart of the current congressional debate.

"The difficulties and complexities of forging consensus around immigration reform remain"

The so-called Texas proviso of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 exempts employers from its prohibition against "harboring" un-

EMPLOYER SANCTIONS

documented aliens. In effect, this exemption means that it is legal for employers to hire unauthorized alien workers, while it is illegal for unauthorized aliens to work. Proposals under consideration would delete the Texas proviso, making employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers subject to fines and/or imprisonment and would require that employers check and keep records of documents showing immigrant status for all new hires.

Central to the sanctions debate is the question of our nation's economic interests. Proponents argue that sanctions would reduce illegal immigration by shutting off the magnet of employment which brings undocumented workers into the United States and thus free jobs for unemployed Americans.

However, as noted earlier, most recent studies indicate that the undocumented do not compete directly with U.S. workers. In fact, according to the Urban Institute, the Rand Corporation, and the President's Council of Economic Advisors, recent immigrant flows seem to have helped our economy by filling labor market needs, taking jobs Americans do not want, and creating higher-level jobs, which typically are held by the native-born.

"Employer sanctions would dramatically increase discrimination against people who look foreign"

Opponents point out that state employer sanctions laws and similar laws in many other countries simply have not worked. A key reason why Hispanic organizations have consistently opposed these measures is the fear that employer sanctions would dramatically increase discrimination against people who, because of the way they look and speak, appear "foreign." Fearful of stiff penalties, an employer has great incentive to play it safe by avoiding applicants who *might be* undocumented aliens. The suspect person who is denied a job could very well be an American citizen. These concerns are based on experience; in 1984, while the House debated passage of employer sanctions legislation, the *Los Angeles Times* quoted employers who admitted to screening Hispanics out of job applicant pools because they thought that these sanctions might become law.

Opponents of sanctions argue, then, that passing legislation which may cause discrimination against citizens and legal aliens, and is unlikely to stop the flow of illegal immigrants, is unwise and unjust. Instead, they endorse increased enforcement of labor laws, such as minimum wage and hour and Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements, to remove employer's opportunities to exploit the undocumented.

LEGALIZATION

Approximately 3 to 5 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States. Some are members of families that include legal immigrants and citizens who have lived here for decades. Current research suggests that in most cases these immigrants are law-abiding, hard-working people who contribute to the U.S. economy but are largely unprotected by U.S. laws. Legalization would allow those undocumented immigrants who demonstrate several years of continuous residence in

the United States and who are otherwise admissible as immigrants to become legal residents on a case-by-case basis.

Opponents of legalization say that it is a blanket amnesty which unjustly rewards criminals and that it is unfair to those who have waited years in other countries to come to the United States legally. They add that legalization would encourage future waves of illegal immigration, thus hurting efforts to regain control of our borders.

Proponents argue that legalization is necessary to uphold the rule of law and that legalization is a critical first step to border control. The commission—along with Hispanic, religious, labor, and civil liberties groups—took the position that all of society suffers from the existence of an exploitable underclass and that legalization is a more humane and feasible solution than mass deportation. And there is a practical advantage to legalization, say its supporters. It would allow an already overburdened INS to concentrate its enforcement efforts on halting illegal entries, rather than on removing long-term undocumented residents.

Finally, supporters of legalization argue that those undocumented workers who would be eligible are people that the United States wants and needs. They are productive. Most pay taxes; few make use of public assistance programs. With the exception of their immigration status, they obey the law. And they share basic American values and aspirations.

"The undocumented immigrants who would be legalized are people the U.S. society wants and needs"

TEMPORARY WORKERS

Currently, some 20,000 temporary workers come to the United States annually for agricultural jobs. Most cut sugarcane in Florida and pick apples in the Northeast. A series of proposals being debated in Congress would make it easier for employers to get government approval to import temporary workers and would expand the size of the current programs to approximately 300,000 to 500,000 workers annually.

Representatives of western agricultural interests, the strongest proponents of temporary-worker programs, argue that the combination of employer sanctions and legalization would dramatically reduce the seasonal agricultural work force. They say the economic interests of the nation would be threatened; severe labor shortages would result because native workers either cannot or will not do work now done by undocumented immigrants. They also claim that temporary-worker programs would regularize the use of undocumented labor, re-establishing the rule of law and improving working conditions for all workers.

Opponents argue that expanded temporary-worker programs would benefit only a small, powerful industry, which would profit from a docile foreign labor force that would be excluded from seeking citizenship. Greater economic interests, they say, rest with our domestic farmworkers, who suffer from employment rates as high as 43%. Recent reports also call into question the degree of agribusiness dependence on undocumented labor; some studies say only 20% of the agricultural work force is illegal. Temporary-worker programs thus seem to contra-

dict other immigration reform measures, which seek to limit alleged immigrant competition for jobs.

"History shows that temporary-worker programs increase illegal immigration while eroding the working and living standards of all workers"

Yet the strongest arguments against these programs center on the themes of border control and the rule of law. History shows that temporary-worker programs *increase* illegal immigration while eroding the working and living standards of all workers. They also introduce into our society a large group of second-class residents. This, noted the staff of the Select Commission, presents great problems:

> One of the reasons that the Commission did not support a large-scale guest worker program was its fear that [it] would establish a special class of workers in the United States who would be identified as foreign, considered fit for only certain kinds of work, and who would not be covered by all the basic entitlements of other U.S. residents.

Each of these key issues has generated bitter debate among very powerful interests, making compromise very difficult. Attempts to pass immigration reform legislation have therefore consistently failed. Yet public and congressional concerns over illegal immigration have not subsided, and the congressional debate continues.

HISPANICS AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

Immigration laws today affect Hispanics more than any other ethnic group. Effective immigration reform would benefit both Hispanics and the nation as a whole, and changes in national immigration policy are of critical importance to the Hispanic community. The National Council of La Raza has spent a great deal of time and effort studying immigration policy issues. The crucial issue is not whether there is a problem. Rather, what is the nature of the problem, and what are the most appropriate and effective policy responses?

Achieving reform requires rational consensus, not emotional responses or a "crisis" atmosphere. Past debates about immigration reform have been tainted by the use of exaggerated estimates and popular misconceptions of the size and effect of immigrant populations that portrayed a society "under seige." The current debate has been no exception. Past immigration debates have also shown the dangers involved in using fear and nativist sentiments to rally support behind legislative initiatives. Racial quotas, "repatriation campaigns," and other measures have ultimately disturbed—and at times disgraced—our nation. Immigration reform should be based on substantive data and should be consistent with American ideals.

"Achieving immigration reform requires rational consensus, not emotional responses"

The National Council of La Raza believes that certain crucial steps must be taken to control U.S. borders, preserve the economic interests of the nation, and uphold the rule of law in an open society.

— *Enhanced enforcement activities.* Too many of the INS's resources are spent seeking out undocumented people already in the country, which is difficult and costly and which may lead to violations of the

civil rights of citizens and legal residents. If more resources were redirected to the borders and other points of entry, with special emphasis on alien smugglers, illegal immigration could be greatly reduced.

— *Legalization.* American society cannot tolerate the existence of an exploitable underclass, and legalization is the most humane way of solving this national problem. A broad legalization program would also allow the INS to target its efforts on the border.

— *Strict enforcement of existing labor laws.* Wage and hour laws already prohibit the practices used by some employers to exploit undocumented workers. Once these laws are strictly enforced, there will be far less incentive for employers to hire the undocumented.

— *Economic development in sending countries.* This is the only policy that goes to the root causes of illegal immigration. Economic development would include not only foreign aid but also the restructuring of tax and trade policies which hinder development abroad.

Public policy which invites injustice is not an appropriate response to the problem of illegal immigration. Our laws must be changed to ensure the integrity of our national immigration policy, to allow our industries to prosper by employing immigrant labor in a humane way, and to erase disturbing traces of the xenophobia that is inconsistent with our values and traditions.

BROADER ISSUES: WORLD INTERDEPENDENCE

There is another piece in the immigration policy puzzle. In addition to meeting domestic needs and reflecting American ideals, U.S. immigration policy must meet the challenge of an increasingly interdependent world community, referred to by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as the "world house." Improved transportation and communication affect both immigration and attitudes, and the movement of people among nations affects both sending and receiving countries more directly and dramatically than ever before.

Three truths underlie this fact. First, American foreign policy inevitably affects immigration to the United States; thus U.S. involvement in Indochina and the U.S. role in the civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador have affected the number of emigrants from those countries who seek to enter the United States. Second, political and economic conditions throughout the world are primary causes of emigration; events such as political repression in Poland and the planned return of Hong Kong to China have increased immigration to the United States. Third, and perhaps least well recognized, American immigration policies and our treatment of new arrivals can have a profound effect on political beliefs of people around the world.

The connections between immigration and foreign policy are clear and compelling. Most major recent migrations to the United States

have occurred as a result of political instability or changes in the political system of the home country; the United States has been most willing to accept large numbers of newcomers when American foreign policy interests have been directly involved. Thus, in recent years there have been major influxes of Indochinese, Cubans, and Latin Americans as well as Afghans, Poles, and Ethiopians, all seeking refuge in the United States. American foreign policy can also reduce immigration. For example, international development strategies such as the Caribbean Basin Initiative may well help to increase political and economic stability in the region, thereby reducing emigration. Many groups concerned with illegal Mexican immigration believe that the best long-term remedy is effective economic development which creates jobs south of the border; some also argue that to close off the border to illegal immigration without such an effort could threaten the political stability of Mexico. Such interdependence between foreign policy and immigration requires that immigration policies be consistent with the nation's foreign policy interests.

"The connections between immigration and foreign policy are clear and compelling"

Less obvious but no less important than direct foreign policy relationships is the transmission of values and ideas. In a world of near-instant communication and rapid transportation, the experiences of immigrants and refugees in the United States—and their interpretation and adoption of American values—are easily shared with families and friends who remain in their homelands. These "political remittances," political communication from new entrants in the United States to other nations, have the potential for transmitting our nation's ideals of democratic freedom and economic opportunity in an unprecedented and extremely effective way.

This potential is exemplified by the Filipino experience. Exiled to the United States, Benigno and Corazon Aquino learned about the American political system, established networks with other Filipino refugees and between the United States and their home country, and set in motion forces that recently brought an end to the Marcos regime and the beginnings of democracy in the Philippines. There are also indications that Haitians who fled to the United States to escape the political oppression and poverty of the Duvalier regime are returning home to apply the lessons of American democracy to post-Duvalier Haiti.

As a country dedicated to exporting democracy and political freedom, the United States can translate generous immigration and refugee policies into lessons about our political system that may affect the future political structure of many nations.

"Global interdependence requires the United States to look at immigration in a new way"

Such global interdependence, with its opportunities and dangers, requires the United States to look at immigration in a new way, assessing both practical and moral considerations. Thus, recognizing the direct connection between Mexico's economic crisis and undocumented immigration, the American public and policy makers may also perceive a direct, practical self-interest in cooperative ventures aimed at strengthening the Mexican economy. In the words of Dr. King, "in a real sense, all life is interrelated. The agony of the poor impoverishes

the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich. We are inevitably our brother's keeper because we are our brother's brother. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

This concept of interdependence presents the United States with an opportunity to blend its cherished concept of an immigrant heritage with a more modern sense of our place in the world house. Much of the strength, richness, and resilience of American democratic culture has resulted from keeping open the "golden door." All recent history confirms this fact, and present realities reinforce it. Practically and morally, an immigration policy that is humane, generous, and fair is in America's enlightened self-interest.

"A humane, generous, and fair immigration policy is in America's enlightened self-interest"

KEEPING THE TORCH LIT

— Summing Up

SUMMING UP

The centennial celebration of the Statue of Liberty provides an appropriate opportunity for Americans to recall and to learn from our history as a nation of immigrants. While few Hispanics entered the United States through Ellis Island, Hispanic immigrants past and present reflect the strivings, motivations, and energy of other immigrant groups. To Hispanics, as to other ethnic and nationality groups, the Statue of Liberty symbolizes the United States as a land of freedom and opportunity.

Like earlier immigrants from other parts of the world, today's new arrivals from Mexico, Cuba, and other parts of Latin America seek political and religious freedom and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. Like other immigrants, Hispanics gradually become part of American society, and typically become fully acculturated within three generations. As with other groups, this need not mean a loss of their ethnic identity; it does mean fluency in English and adoption of the core values of American society—the ideals of individual freedom and equal opportunity.

"Immigration provides tremendous economic and social benefits to American society"

Hispanics have contributed to every aspect of our national growth and development, from early exploration of the Southwest to overrepresentation in the Armed Forces in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Hispanic Americans participate in every aspect of national life, and Hispanic immigrants have made valuable contributions to our economic strength and cultural richness.

Hispanic immigrants are both similar to and unique among other new Americans. They share a deep sense of patriotism and an ability to adapt and overcome obstacles to success. Like other Americans, they seek peace, freedom, and a better life for their children. Like other new immigrants, they are willing to work hard at almost any job. They are special in their cultural and linguistic heritage, their traditions, their crafts and skills. Hispanics represent an increasingly important resource.

This nation must change its immigration policies. Immigration reform is essential not only to gain control of our borders but also to prepare the country to meet the future needs of the labor market and to retain its leadership role in world affairs. Immigration from Mexico and other countries in Latin America is likely to continue at high levels in the foreseeable future, both because the United States remains a land of opportunity and because political turmoil and poverty will continue to make migrants of many Latin Americans. It is not only possible but necessary to forge immigration legislation and to implement immigration practices that can control immigration and are fair and humane at the same time. Immigration policy should include a generous legalization program which will eliminate the existing underclass and strengthen respect for the law, avoid provisions which would lead to discrimination against American citizens and legal residents, minimize the use of guest workers, and provide equitable color-blind opportunities for immigration which stress family reunification.

"The nation as a whole will benefit by keeping the torch lit"

Such policies are likely to be adopted only if the American public and American policy makers come to understand that immigration in general—and Hispanic immigration in particular—provides tremendous economic and social benefits to American society. More than 200 years of experience show that this nation can best meet the challenges of the twenty-first century by continuing its tradition as a nation of refuge, providing opportunities to individuals and families willing to risk the physical dangers and psychological stresses of immigration. The lessons of history tell us that the nation as a whole will benefit by keeping the torch lit, as a symbol to the world of America's unique heritage and ideals.

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